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Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05
EB-08 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 /093 W
----------029455 120418Z /20
O 120328Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8488
INFO AMEMBASSY GENEVA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KABUL 4712

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AF, UK, UN, US
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE METHOD TO LIBERATE AFGHAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF: (A) STATE 146488; (B) LONDON 8986 (C) STATE 143749

1. SINCE AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN HAS STATED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS THAT, "IF THERE IS ANYBODY WILLING TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING "OF THE "FEW" WOMEN AND CHILDREN BEING HELD IN AFGHAN PRISONS, THEY "COULD BE RELEASED" (REFTEL A), WE INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN THE USG NOW HAS A DIRECT, LEGITIMATE STAKE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS ISSUE TOGETHER WITH THE VBRITISH (REFTELS B AND C). THEREFORE, WE URGE THAT THE DEPARTMENT INFORM THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE THAT WE TOO HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT AND WISH TO LEND A HAND IN GETTING AN APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL AGENCY TO HELP THESE PRISONERS. WE SHOULD ALSO INFORM THE ICRC OR UNHCR. WE ARE NOTIFYING THE BRITISH EMBASSY HERE OF AMIN'S COMMENTS TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS. THE IMPRISONED WOMEN AND CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO REMAIN IN THEIR CELLS ONE DAY LONGER THAN NECESSARY BECAUSE OF BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS.

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2. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT WHICHEVER INTERNATIONAL AGENCY AGREES TO HELP THEM IT SHOULD SEND A VERY HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO KABUL, WHEN HE COMES, HE SHOULD, INTER ALIA, BE PREPARED TO ASK AND DEAL WITH THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

A. HOW MANY PERSONS CAN BE LIBERATED? (CAN BOYS OVER THE AGE OF

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14 BE FREED -- OR MUST THEY REMAIN FOR TRIAL, AS THE AFGHAN GOVERN-
MENT HAS THREATENED?) WE ARE NOT SURE HOW MANY WOMEN AND CHILDREN
ARE INCARCERATED, BUT WOULD GUESS THE FIGURE IS BETWEEN 50 AND
100.

B. WHERE DO THEY WANT TO GO? (THIS IS PRESUMABLY A STANDARD
QUESTION TO HELP THE INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES PLACE THE REFUGEES.)
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